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Mr. Eric P. Newman
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63105

Dear Eric:

I am sorry that I am so very slow in my reply to your letter of April 20, 1972 and in acknowledging receipt of your 1968 ANS presentation. The past several months have been rather difficult for me and I have not been able to make a careful study of your paper. I have only been able to take the time to make a couple of hurried readings.

Part of the problem is that I have found your presentation very difficult to follow. I concluded that I would have to sketch up a number of charts in order to understand the interrelationships of so many facts. The material is great, but there is a definite need for some charts - especially where the valuations of coppers as a function of time, locale, etc. are concerned. Also - the relative timing of English vs American events. I have started a couple of rough charts but that is about as far as I have gotten.

I have many questions but I expect that most of them will be answered when I get all the ideas into context. In the meantime let me toss in a few thoughts and observations relative to your six points on the last page:

1. re English evasion halfpence --- I wonder why these would not have been imported from England (after 1771) as well as counterfeit halfpence ?
2. re Bungtown as applied to the evasions -- This seems to be in conflict with your concluding statement in your point #6.
3. re Bungtown as a colorful American slang word -- A derisive phrase - yes! But I get the feeling that the connotation of "comic" just does not fit the situation, nor does "humorous". --- Also, if Bungtown did in fact derive from the Shakespeare connotation, then its total absence from the British literature (and usage) is very difficult to comprehend.
4. North Swansea, Mass. You have made a much stronger case for Westerly, R.I. !
5. re name Bungtown, etc. --- I just cannot see how you develop the logic for this conclusion Eric, it is very

weak and I believe

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weak, and I believe lessens the credibility of the entire paper. I would suggest that you drop this idea for the moment.

6. re during the first half of the 19th century ---
Yes indeed! But perhaps not to denote "worthlessness" as much as "unusualness" that might lead to a questionable value.

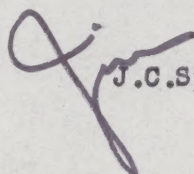
I suppose Eric that the most disturbing element to me is that your entire analysis is based on "published" data from newspapers, journals, and the like, with very little recognition of the activities of the various individuals (Buell, Atlee, Jarvis, etc.) contemporary with the period of most probable concern (i.e.- 1780 to 1790) or the very extensive operations of the N.E. coinage counterfeiters of that era.

My interest in this latter element developed as I did some digging into the operations of Abel Buell after his return from exile in Florida. I touched very lightly on this in my introduction to Buell that I included in the current issue of ONL. That man was just incredible!

When I am able to budget more time to your paper I shall write to you again Eric. At the earliest this will not be for several months so cannot influence whatever you may decide to say in New Orleans.

Two final thoughts in closing Eric. Have you ever considered how you would reply if someone asks you the modern translation of the balance of Doll's tirade against Pistol, especially the punch line? And - what about the definition of "bung" as - to bruise, to fight, or "bunged" as the result of having been in a fight (in an "ugly and dirty American community" ?)

Best regards,


J.C. Spilman

** I missed your word "circulating" which covers this!

